



Brought to you by Allergy Force — the food allergy app

Can Your Child Self-Manage Their Food Allergies?

READINESS CHECK

Parenting is a process of loving by letting go, preparing your child — little by little — to leave home and begin their adult lives apart from you, sometimes far from you. Readyng your child to self-manage their food allergies adds a unique dimension to your parenting goals and process. Parents with children in their later middle school into high school years will find this readiness check helpful to review periodically. Think of it as your North Star — to keep you on track as you handoff food allergy responsibilities to your child. (If you are a parent of a young child with food allergies, bookmark this as a resource to revisit much later.) For important, additional context don't miss Allergy Force's series of [articles](#) on empowering kids with food allergies.

1. THEIR FOOD ALLERGY DIAGNOSIS

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE THEIR FOOD ALLERGIES? Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. What all their allergens are, individually and by category?			
2. What the less common names are for their allergens? What kinds of foods are more likely to contain their allergens (e.g., protein bars, baked goods, frozen treats, chocolate, etc.)?			
3. What non-food items can contain their allergens (like pet food, personal care products, alcohol)?			
4. What cross contact is and how/where it can happen?			
5. Where their epinephrine auto-injector, antihistamine and any other emergency medications are at any given moment, on any given day?			
6. What anaphylaxis is and what the possible symptoms of anaphylaxis are? (Even if they have never experienced anaphylaxis before.)			
7. What their past allergic reactions have looked/felt like?			
8. What their Emergency Action Plan (aka, Emergency Care Plan, Food Allergy Action Plan) says to do for mild and for severe allergic reactions.			
9. What steps they should take if they think they are having an allergic reaction & in what order?			

2. CARE & USE OF THEIR AUTO-INJECTOR

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE THEIR EPINEPHRINE? Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. What kind of auto-injector devices they carry?			
2. How their devices work and how to use them?			
3. When and how to call 911 for help for an allergic reaction?			
4. Why and when to use their second auto-injector?			
4. How to protect their auto-injector from temperature extremes — both hot and cold?			
5. How to track their auto-injector expiration dates and when to renew them?			
6. How to refill their auto-injector prescriptions?			

EMPOWERING KIDS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES FOR THE FUTURE

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3. SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS & CONFIDENCE

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-ADVOCATE? Can you answer yes to the following questions — can they:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. List all their food allergies and explain what help they need from others to stay safe?			
2. Share their food allergy details confidently and accurately with adults, people in positions of authority (e.g., like restaurant wait staff, dining services staff, coaches, professors, school nurses, medical professionals)?			
3. Talk proactively and openly with peers about their food allergies and needs (e.g., like bunkmates, romantic interests, roommates, RA's, study partners, teammates)?			
4. Thoroughly teach people in their 'circle of trust' the symptoms of anaphylaxis, how to use their auto-injectors, what allergic reactions can look like, and what needs to be done to treat a reaction?			
5. Explain the details of their Emergency Action Plan (its location, its contents) confidently and accurately to friends, coaches, supervisors, a random flight attendant?			

4. FOOD LABEL READING & INTERPRETATION

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE FOOD LABEL READING? Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. How and where to find their allergens on food labels?			
2. What the less common names for their allergens are?			
3. What Precautionary Allergen Labelling {PAL} is and where it is located on food labels?			
4. What 'May Contain' statements really mean and how they should factor it into their 'OK-To-Buy'/'Do-Not-Buy' decision-making?			
5. How to interpret other PAL labelling related to manufacturing equipment and facilities and how they should factor it into their ok-to-buy/do-not-buy decision making?			
6. When and how to call a manufacturer for more allergen information and what questions to ask?			

5. RESTAURANT NAVIGATION KNOW-HOW

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE DINING OUT? Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. What types of cuisine, in general, are particularly risky for their allergy profile (e.g., Chinese, Thai, Mexican, Indian, Etc. Cuisine?)			
2. What foods typically contain their allergens (e.g., like pesto, aioli, BBQ sauces, pizza, etc.?)			
3. How to find restaurant menus online and evaluate them for possible safe options and risks?			
4. How to call ahead? Who to speak with? What to tell the restaurant? What to ask?			
5. When to veto a restaurant and how to suggest alternatives to friends, acquaintances?			
6. When and with whom to have their on-site allergy conversation after arriving at the restaurant?			
7. What questions to ask about menu items and kitchen practices after arriving at the restaurant?			
8. How to send a meal politely & confidently back to the kitchen if they spot allergens in their order?			
9. What to do when they lose confidence in a restaurant after being seated and how to make a graceful exit if they choose to leave?			

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6. FOOD ALLERGY SOCIAL SAVVY

HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE SOCIALLY? Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:	Not Yet Initiated	Work In Progress	Yes! Mastered
1. How to build a 'circle of trust' with people who will be there for them in emergencies?			
2. How to evaluate social event risks before going? Who to ask? What to ask?			
3. How to devise practical, comfortable-to-implement workarounds for event risks they uncover?			
4. Which alcoholic beverages are safe options for them (before they experiment, before they leave home?)			
5. What stay-safe strategies are helpful for navigating parties? (For example, like eating before going, setting a consumption limit, not sharing drinks, drinking directly from bottles/cans vs. glasses, being wary of mixed/spiked drinks, avoiding drinking games, having face-saving exit strategies at the ready)			
6. When and how to disclose their food allergies to a 'special' friend, and when to talk about ways to keep themselves safe when romance is in the air?			
7. How and when to {gracefully} opt-out of social situations.			



—the food allergy app

The Allergy Force app has everyday features you will use all the time and emergency features that could save your life if you make a mistake. All on your phone. All within reach when you need them most. It's peace of mind in your pocket. [Learn more.](#)

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